ETS/IAQ PROCESS

In September, 1991 OSHA issued its Request for Information (RFI) on indoor air quality. It consisted of 92 questions, two dozen of which dealt specifically with environmental tobacco smoke. We responded, as did many other industries and individuals, resulting in over 1,200 responses. Our response to OSHA, briefly stated, was that indoor air quality problems should be addressed by a "building systems approach". That approach encourages proper ventilation and filtration of indoor air as well as regular maintenance of the HVAC systems. We maintain that ETS is a minor contributor to indoor air quality problems, and the scientific studies we entered into the docket support that.

On March 25th of this year OSHA issued its first notice of proposed rulemaking. Despite a lack of supporting data in the record, the proposal calls for designated smoking areas with separate exhaust. The proposed rule would apply to nearly six million workplaces including bars and restaurants. Separate smoking areas with separate exhaust is an unnecessary measure in a properly controlled indoor environment and is not supported by the available science. Specifically, it is not supported by the information on the OSHA docket.

OSHA has yet to enter into the record much of the material on which it relies in its proposal. When we do receive that information we will be reviewing it carefully and preparing responses to it. We expect that there will be an extension to the current time period for responding.

We plan to participate fully in the rulemaking process and are currently drafting a response and working with experts who may enter comments into the record, or be available for hearings to be held this summer.

Remember, this is the first step. By its own admission, OSHA does not expect to issue a final rule before year-end 1995.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/stxj0000